Freight charges

2179. SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: SHRI GUFRAN AZAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that freight charges for transport of fertilizer have been increased continuously by Railways resulting in the increase in fertilizer prices;

(b) whether Government propose to examine the possibility to squeeze the freight charges to 1980-81 level, thus obviating the need for payment of subsidy to fertilizer industry; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN); (a) In the Railway Budget proposals for 1992-93, Chemical Manures have been exempted from both the proposed general increase in the freight rates and the stepping up in the classification. They were also exempted from the increase in freight rates effected from 15.7.1980 and 1.4.1988.

(b) and (c) As the freight rate for Chemical Manures is already at a comparatively low level, there is no proposal for any reduction in the freight rate.

Representation Regarding Appointment of Officers in Traffic Department in the Railways

2180. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently received any representation regarding appointment of a number of officers from Traffic Department, who are junior to officers of other departments, as General Managers on various zonal railways during the last one year;

(b) whether a very junior General Manager has been appointed to officiate as Member (Traffic) in the Railway Board;

(c) whether Government have also received any complaint that things are being manipulated to project the claim of a Traffic Officer as the next Chairman, Railway Board, when the present incumbent retires on 31st March, 1992;

(d) whether all these actions are against the directives of ACC (Appointment Committee of Cabinet) and PMO (Prime Minister's Office); and

(e) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to set right?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Privatisation of Railways

2181. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the details of the scheme for privatisation of the existing Departmental Catering units have since been finalised;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, by when the details are likely to be finalised;

(d) whether Government have explored the possibility of commercial expoilation of Railway Land;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, by when Government are likely to take a decision in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has been decided that no new catering/vending units would be managed departmentally and the existing departmental units will be privatised in phase and that in future only reputed and professional caterers would be selected as licensee for managing catering services.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) to (f) There is a proposal to explore possibilities of exploitation of space over land. The matter is in conceptual stage and no time-frame can be given at this stage.